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REMARKS

ON

PRINCIPAL HILL'S SPEECH.

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REMARKS
ON
A PAMPHLET,
ENTITLED,
" SUBSTANCE
OF
PRINCIPAL HILL'S SPEECH
IN THE
GENERAL ASSEMBLY,
MAY 23. 1807,
UPON THE MOTION FOR THANKING HIS
MAJESTY FOR HIS SUPPORT OF THE
PROTESTANT ESTABLISHMENT. "

BY
SIR HENRY MONCREIFF WELLWOOD,
BART. D. D.

EDINBURGH:
Printed by D. Willison,
FOR ARCHIBALD CONSTABLE AND COMPANY.
1807.



REMARKS, &c.

A PAPER has just been published, entitled, ' Substance of Principal Hill's speech, in the ' General Assembly, May 23d, 1807, upon ' the motion for thanking his Majesty for his ' support of the Protestant Establishment. '

There is no such motion on the record of the Assembly, as is here referred to. But any thing contained in this printed speech, which was really delivered in the Assembly, was pronounced, while the Assembly were deliberating on the several paragraphs, in a draught prepared of a dutiful and loyal Address to his Majesty.

The author of the Speech has introduced his publication, by quoting a long paragraph from the Address to his Majesty, which he brings forward in such a form, as to lead the public to believe, that the whole paragraph had

had been objected to, and had become the subject of debate; though he perfectly knew, at the time he was writing, that the only part of it to which any objection or debate was applied, is the last sentence, beginning with the words, ' We have lately seen, ' &c.

The whole paragraph, printed by him, is in the following words. ' It is the happiness
' of your people, that, during an auspicious
' reign of forty-seven years, the conduct of
' your Majesty has been uniformly governed
' by the principles which placed the House of
' Brunswick upon the throne of these realms :
' And the Ministers and Elders of the Church
' of Scotland, attached to those principles from
' conviction, as well as by all their habits and
' institutions, recollect, with peculiar satisfaction,
' that your Majesty has exhibited the
' brightest example of a sacred regard to the
' Protestant reformed religion. While, in the
' series of indulgences to your Roman Catholic
' subjects, which have marked your Majesty's
' reign, we recognize the enlightened
' operation of a mild and tolerant spirit, we
' have always found your Majesty the faithful
' guardian

'guardian of the Protestant Establishment.
 'We have lately seen the forces of that Establish-
 'ment upheld, by the firm and dignified exercise
 'of the constitutional prerogative of the Crown;
 'and, feeling the security which all our rights
 'and privileges derive from the solicitude with
 'which your Majesty discharges the duties of
 'the Sovereign of a free people, we unite with
 'our fellow-subjects in offering the affectionate
 'tribute justly due to the Royal cares for the
 'public welfare.'

After setting down this paragraph at length,
 the author of the Speech tells us, in broad and
 unqualified terms, that there was a 'debate of
 several hours upon the expressions of this
 'paragraph,' as if the whole of his quotation
 had become the subject of debate. The in-
 tention of this representation I have no inclina-
 tion to investigate. But, in opposition to it,
 I take the liberty of publishing the following
 account of the proceedings, which any person
 may verify by consulting the record.

The

“ The draught of a loyal Address to his Majesty, on the present situation of public affairs, having been prepared by the Committee appointed for that purpose, and now produced, the same was first read all over, and thereafter paragraph by paragraph. A motion was made and seconded, ‘ to approve of the Address. ’ An objection was stated to the following clause standing part of the Address: *viz.*

‘ We have lately seen the fences of that establishment upheld, by the firm and dignified exercise of the constitutional prerogative of the Crown ; and feeling the security which all our rights and privileges derive, from the solicitude with which your Majesty discharges the duties of the Sovereign of a free people, we unite with our fellow-subjects, in offering the affectionate tribute, justly due to the Royal cares for the public welfare. ’

And, after reasoning, it was afterwards moved, that the above clause remaining part of the Address, the following addition should be made to it: *viz.*

‘ We venerate the concern which his Majesty manifests in all his conduct, and at all times,

times, for the religious interests of his people ;
yet, consistently with our principles as Pres-
byterians, and as members of a National
Church, which has the same legal establish-
ment with the Church of England, we can-
not but contemplate with regret, the continu-
ance of those circumstances, which exclude
Presbyterians from civil and military offices,
without a public profession of Episcopacy ;
and we trust, that the time will soon come,
when the members of the Presbyterian and
Episcopal Churches will be placed on an
equal footing in all parts of his Majesty's do-
minions. '

After long reasoning, the vote was put, Ap-
prove or Amend ; and the roll being called,
and votes marked, it carried, by a great major-
ity, Approve ; and, therefore, the Assembly
did, and hereby do approve of the first para-
graph in the Address as it stands ; against which
sentence the Reverend Sir Henry Moncreiff
Wellwood entered his dissent ; and those who
should adhere to him were allowed to enter
their dissent at any after diet of the Assembly.

Thereafter

Thereafter it was moved (by Sir Henry Moncreiff Wellwood), to insert the following paragraph into the Address: *viz.*

‘ In recollecting your Majesty’s uniform
 ‘ zeal for the interests of religion, justice, and
 ‘ humanity, the many public measures for the
 ‘ promotion of these great interests, by which
 ‘ your Majesty’s reign has been distinguished,
 ‘ and the exalted character which, under your
 ‘ Majesty’s government, the British nation has
 ‘ acquired, it is with heartfelt satisfaction that
 ‘ we congratulate your Majesty on the final
 ‘ Abolition of the African Slave Trade, which
 ‘ had so long polluted our commerce, and tarnished
 ‘ the honour of the British name. We
 ‘ feel, in common with the great body of our
 ‘ fellow-subjects, that the Act of the last Session
 ‘ of Parliament, which prohibited the importation
 ‘ of slaves into the West India Colonies, will ever be
 ‘ regarded as one of the most splendid events of your
 ‘ Majesty’s reign; and, while it proclaims to the world
 ‘ the justice of the British character, will send the tidings
 ‘ of peace and benevolence to the injured nations
 ‘ of Africa.’

The

The General Assembly approved of this addition ; and the Address, with the addition, was signed by the Moderator in their presence."

The proceedings speak for themselves ; but the Author of the printed Speech has supported his representation by another expedient.

He has published the reasons of dissent which I gave in to the Assembly, but has deliberately separated them from the title or introduction of the paper which he professes to copy ; and has evidently done so, for the purpose of keeping out of view the precise points to which the dissent relates, and which were the subject of the debate.

If he chose to publish the reasons of dissent, a proceeding to which I have no sort of objection, he had no right to mutilate the paper which contained them, by suppressing its title.

I give it here, at length, although it contains a repetition of what has been already stated, from the proceedings of the Assembly.

' Reasons of Dissent from the sentence of
' the General Assembly on the 23d of May
' last, resolving to adopt the following clause,
' in a dutiful and loyal address to his Majesty,

B

' viz.

“ *viz.* “ We have lately seen the fences of the
 “ Protestant Establishment upheld, by the firm
 “ and dignified exercise of the Constitutional
 “ Prerogative of the Crown ; and, feeling the
 “ security which all our rights and privileges
 “ derive, from the solicitude with which your
 “ Majesty discharges the duties of the Sovereign
 “ of a free people, we unite with our
 “ fellow-subjects, in offering the affectionate
 “ tribute, justly due to the Royal cares for the
 “ public welfare : ” And refusing to insert the
 “ following amendment, which it was proposed
 “ to add to this clause, if it should remain
 “ part of the address, *viz.* “ We venerate the
 “ concern which his Majesty manifests in all
 “ his conduct, and at all times, for the religious
 “ interests of his people ; yet, consistently
 “ with our principles as Presbyterians, and as
 “ members of a National Church, which has
 “ the same legal establishment with the Church
 “ of England, we cannot but contemplate with
 “ regret, the continuance of those circumstances,
 “ which exclude Presbyterians from civil
 “ and military offices, without a public
 “ profession of Episcopacy ; and we trust that
 “ the

“ the time will soon come, when the members
 “ of the Presbyterian and Episcopal Churches
 “ will be placed on an equal footing, in all
 “ parts of his Majesty’s dominions. ”

“ We dissent,

“ 1. Because we apprehend that the language
 of the clause objected to may be misinterpreted,
 and, contrary to the avowed intentions of those
 who prepared it, may be applied to the late
 change in his Majesty’s Councils, on which, as
 far as we could perceive, it was not the design
 of the Assembly to express an opinion.

“ 2. Because, as Presbyterians, and as mem-
 bers of a Church, which has the same au-
 thority and independence as the Church of
 England, or in consistency with the unanimous
 resolution of the Assembly in 1790, we cannot
 consider the Protestant Establishment as upheld
 by the continued operation of the Test and
 Corporation Acts of the Parliament of England,
 by which, Protestant Dissenters from the Epis-
 copal Church, are subjected to the sacramental
 test, before they can be qualified to hold civil
 or military offices ; and which are in practice
 applied

applied even to members of the Church of Scotland, as by law established, contrary, as we apprehend, to the best interests of religion, and to the rights and privileges of our National Church.

“ 3. Because the amendment which was rejected, contains nothing more than a temperate and respectful assertion of the sentiments which we ought to express, with regard to our Protestant Brethren, and of the principles which we are bound to maintain, as members of a Presbyterian Church established by law.

4. “ Because, after the concessions already made to Roman Catholics, during his Majesty’s reign, we are not prepared to affirm, that the fences of the Protestant Establishment would have been essentially injured, by the provisions of the Bill relative to Roman Catholic Officers, introduced into Parliament by the late Administration, and afterwards withdrawn, from respect to his Majesty. ”

This Dissent was subscribed by the following members of Assembly,

‘ Rev.

- ‘ Rev. H. Moncreiff Wellwood, Bart. D. D.
- ‘ Rev. David Dickson, junior
- ‘ Rev. James Wodrow, D. D.
- ‘ Rev. William Donaldson
- ‘ Rev. John MacKenzie, D. D.
- ‘ Rev. Stevenson MacGill, D. D.
- ‘ Rev. William Ritchie
- ‘ Rev. John S. Oughterson
- ‘ Rev. Lewis Balfour
- ‘ Rev. John Dick
- ‘ John Jardine, Advocate
- ‘ Professor John Young
- ‘ Professor George Jardine
- ‘ Professor Dugald Stewart
- ‘ Thomas Adair, Writer to the Signet
- ‘ Thomas Russell of Peebles
- ‘ James Moncreiff, Advocate
- ‘ James Gibson, Writer to the Signet
- ‘ Thomas H. Miller, Advocate
- ‘ John Clerk, Advocate
- ‘ Andrew Skene, Advocate
- ‘ Joseph Gordon, Writer to the Signet. ’

I have given the designations of those who
 subscribed the Dissent, because Dr Hill, in his
 edition,

edition, has set down the name of Thomas Ruffel in the list of Ministers.

The public will judge, after reading these papers, of the justice of the representation with which the Speech is introduced. They will see also, with what truth or authority the Speech has asserted, page 23d, that we were all agreed in approving of the sentence objected to. The fact is, the original motion was this, That the whole of that sentence should be omitted; but, rather than be precluded, by a vote of the majority, from inserting an amendment on the record, it was afterwards moved, to add the amendment proposed, to the sentence objected to, which would have completely changed its aspect; and on this the question was stated. This is the fact; and, when the proceedings before recited are examined, I have no occasion to give myself any further trouble with Principal Hill's declamation.

Before I leave this point, however, I must quote the two following sentences, from page 23d of the printed Speech. 'But in that addition (referring to the amendment) we give the King notice that we are not satisfied; and we

‘ we intimate very plainly, that it is probable we
 ‘ shall soon ask him to do that, which we thank
 ‘ him for not having done, and which he has
 ‘ declared his conscience will not permit him
 ‘ to do. There is an inconsistency in this, not
 ‘ *very creditable to the GOOD SENSE or the*
 ‘ *SINCERITY of the addressers*; and there is an
 ‘ *INDECENCY APPROACHING TO INSULT*, which
 ‘ *we must suppose the mind of the Sovereign*
 ‘ *will deeply feel.*’

I say nothing of the intimation, which the Reverend Principal here assumes, for which there is not even the shadow of foundation, in the terms of the amendment; which certainly intimates no intention to ask *any* thing either soon or late. The assumption is in unison with the greater part of the Speech, in which every thing convenient to its author is supposed, and nothing at all is established, and may safely be left without a reply.

But when the Reverend Principal talks of an inconsistency ‘ not very creditable to the *good sense or the sincerity* of the addressers,’ and of ‘ *an indecency approaching to insult,*’ directed to the Sovereign, and applies this language to those

those who supported the amendment, though he adds nothing to his argument, he expresses, most intelligibly, the state of his own mind.

If those words were spoken, I am happy to think, I have no recollection of them. If I had heard them, they might have provoked a reply which I might have regretted, and he would not soon have forgotten. I am persuaded, however, they belong to that part of his Speech (to which, indeed, as far as my memory goes, a great proportion of it must be referred), which he has announced in the advertisement prefixed to his pamphlet, as having been ‘ meditated,’ but as having ‘ escaped him in the act of speaking.’

But those words are now printed by the author, not as casual expressions, which might have incidentally dropt from him in the heat of debate, but as the cool and deliberate production of the heart, after full and solitary meditation. He who forgets the language, which the manners of society entitle his opponents to expect from him, though he does so in the moment of heat and irritation, degrades himself much more than he can annoy them.

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He who deliberately departs from it, when there ought to be no irritation on his mind, can have no right to exact from them either respect or forbearance. The fairness of this printed Speech, *the good sense and the sincerity* of its author, I leave to the discussion of his friends. For myself, I scorn to retort, what I shall never recollect but with disdain or compassion.

Referring to the proceedings of the General Assembly, relating to the Test Act, in 1790, the author of this printed Speech has been pleased to make the following round assertion, page 21. ‘ The Reverend Baronet did not profit by the alliance *which he then advised*, betwixt the Church of Scotland and the English Dissenters. ’

In the Assembly, in the debate on the Address, the Reverend Principal did, indeed, attempt in substance to say, ‘ That I had, in 1790, *combined* the interests of the Dissenters with the plea of our National Church. ’ But this assertion he was at the moment compelled to retract, in presence of the Assembly ; that is, on my rising instantly to repel it, he admitted

mitted he was 'speaking *wide*,' (as he chose to express himself); and on being answered, that he was speaking so wide, that there was no foundation whatsoever for his assertion, he left that part of his subject immediately, without uttering another syllable relating to it.

The assertion, however, now appears, without any allusion to the interruption he received, new-modelled, and new-vamped; and I am deliberately represented, as having in 1790 *advised an alliance* betwixt the Church of Scotland and the English Dissenters.

If the author of the speech means, that I gave any such advice in what I stated to the Assembly in 1790, I take this public opportunity of giving to this assertion, the most direct contradiction. If he means to assert, that, when the application was made to Parliament in 1791, I either advised, or assisted, to form an alliance, betwixt the Church of Scotland and the English Dissenters, in that application, I am fully prepared to demonstrate the contrary fact, by authentic documents. I respect the claims of the English Dissenters, and think them well entitled to relief

lief from the operation of the Test Acts; which, prescribing a test, at all times injudicious, when applied to Protestants, in my apprehension never did, and never will do any good. But I know too well the difference betwixt their plea, and the rights and privileges of our national Church, ever to have, directly or indirectly, *advised* to combine them.

On the contrary, it is a fact which I know to be beyond contradiction, that many of the members of Parliament in the dissenting interest, peremptorily refused to attend, when our application was introduced into the House of Commons,—for this single reason, that we did not, and would not, combine our plea, with the claims of the Dissenters.

If the Reverend Principal meant to insinuate, that the general resolutions moved by me in 1790 relative to the Test Act, will in any degree support his unfounded assertion, I subjoin those resolutions *verbatim*, and leave him to discover in them, whatever he may suppose will answer his purpose.

“ Proceedings of the General Assembly, May
 “ 27. 1790.—The Assembly, agreeable to a
 “ former

“ former Resolution, proceeded to consider the
 “ overture from the Presbytery of Jedburgh
 “ respecting the Test Act ; and after reasoning
 “ at very great length, the General Assembly
 “ unanimously agreed to adopt the following
 “ Resolutions, on the subject of the said over-
 “ ture, viz.

“ 1st, That by a fundamental article in the
 “ Treaty of Union, the Protestant religion and
 “ Presbyterian church government are unalter-
 “ ably secured, as the only established religion
 “ and church government within this part of
 “ the united kingdom, and are inseparable from
 “ the constitution of the British empire.

“ 2^{dly}, That by the 4th article of the Treaty
 “ of Union it is provided, that there shall be
 “ an equal communication of all rights, privi-
 “ leges, and advantages, which belong to the
 “ subjects, either of Scotland or England, ex-
 “ cept where it is otherwise expressly agreed
 “ by the said treaty.

“ 3^{dly}, That by an Act of the Parliament,
 “ passed the 25th year of the reign of Charles
 “ the Second, all persons within the realm of
 “ England, Wales, or Berwick upon Tweed,
 “ holding.

“ holding any office, or offices, civil or mili-
 “ tary, or receiving any pay, salary, fee, or
 “ wages, or having command or place of trust;
 “ from or under his Majesty, or by authority
 “ derived from him, are liable to severe penal-
 “ ties and forfeitures, unless they shall, within
 “ a limited time, after receiving or being ad-
 “ mitted into such office, pay, salary, or wages,
 “ receive the sacrament of the Lord’s Supper;
 “ in some public church, upon some Lord’s
 “ day, according to the usage of the Church
 “ of England ; and that, in consequence of the
 “ said Act, the members of the Church of
 “ Scotland, holding British offices, civil or mi-
 “ litary, or receiving, as British subjects, any
 “ salary, fee, or wages, from or under his Ma-
 “ jesty, or by authority derived from him,
 “ have been supposed liable to the penalties and
 “ forfeitures, contained in the said statute, un-
 “ less they receive the sacrament of the Lord’s
 “ Supper, according to the usage of the Church
 “ of England.

“ *Atbly,* That as this construction of the
 “ Act constitutes a manifest inequality between
 “ the members of the two established churches
 “ of

“ of Great Britain, is injurious to the morals
 “ of the people of Scotland, and has a tendency
 “ to weaken and undermine the Church of
 “ Scotland, it is the duty of the General As-
 “ sembly, as the guardians of the religious
 “ establishment of Scotland, to take every legal
 “ and constitutional mode, and to embrace the
 “ earliest proper opportunity to obtain effectual
 “ relief, from the grievances arising from the
 “ said Act of the Parliament of England, com-
 “ monly called the Test Act, as affecting the
 “ members of this national Church.

“ It was then moved, and unanimously
 “ agreed to, ‘ That a Committee of this As-
 “ sembly shall now be appointed, with instruc-
 “ tions to take the earliest proper opportunity,
 “ to obtain redress of the grievances stated in the
 “ Resolutions which the Assembly have adopt-
 “ ed, by every legal and constitutional mode;
 “ which they shall judge to be most effectual.’
 “ And a Committee was appointed accordingly,
 “ who are to report to next Assembly.—Sir
 “ Henry Moncreiff appointed Convener.”

Such were the proceedings of the Assembly
 1790, as they stand on the record; and I do
 not

not regret that Principal Hill has given me this opportunity of republishing them. They prove, among other things, whether the Assembly 'was taken by surprise,' in adopting the resolutions contained in them; and how far Principal Hill is entitled to hold that language, after having directly and explicitly concurred in them, at the conclusion of a debate, which lasted from eleven o'clock in the forenoon, till ten o'clock at night: They will satisfy every impartial man, whether the Committee then appointed were sufficiently authorized to apply to Parliament, as they did; and they will serve to recal to our recollection, principles, as well as rights, which the members of the Established Church of Scotland ought never to forget.

I now take my leave of Principal Hill's speech, not being aware, that it contains any thing, besides what I have mentioned, which I ought to have any solicitude to refute.

When the author quotes Alderman Love, the head of the Presbyterians in the reign of Charles the Second, and the answer of the Prince of Orange to King James, and *forgets to tell us, that the question then at issue, was, the power of*
the

the King to suspend the laws ;—when he gives us his own system with regard to the constitutional prerogative of the Crown ;—when he gravely tells us, that he reprobates the introduction of politics into the debates of the Assembly ;—when he asserts that I moved the resolutions in 1790, ‘ *after the Dissenters in England had been applying to Parliament for the repeal of the Test Act,* ’ in order to take this mode of identifying the mover of those resolutions, with the Dissenters ;—when he mentions, as speakers on the opposite side to him, only Sir Henry Moncreiff and Principal Brown, as if they had been the only speakers in the Assembly who supported the amendment on the address ;—when he represents it as the sentiment at least of Sir Henry Moncreiff, or supposes it may be his sentiment, (p. 21.) ‘ that our plea for exemption (from the operation of the Test Act) will be strengthened, in the judgment of our brethren in England, by our making common cause with the Roman Catholics ; and that the claims of an Established Church will be eked out, by an alliance with the

‘ the enemies of the Protestant faith* ; ’—when he supposes those who differ from him, on the subject before the Assembly, page 19th, ‘ as stretching forth their hands to uphold the tottering throne of Antichrist ; ’—and when he represents the annual Bill of Indemnity as a boon, of equal value, with complete emancipation from tests, to which we ought never to have been subjected :—His speech may be safely left to its own weight. If it outlives the occasion which produced it, or the administration to whom it is addressed, it has certainly no very probable chance of being transmitted to future generations.

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* I transcribe the passage, that there may be no misrepresentation of the meaning imputed to me.

P. 21. of Principal Hill's speech.

‘ The Reverend Baronet did not profit by the alliance which he then advised, between the members of the Church of Scotland, and the English Dissenters. He now turns to allies of a different description ;—And does he really think, that, in this moment of alarm, our plea for exemption will be strengthened, in the judgment of our brethren in England, by our making common cause with the Roman Catholics ; that the claims of an Established Church will be eked out, by an alliance with the enemies of the Protestant faith ? ’

I have perhaps said enough, besides, to convince Principal Hill, that personal attacks confined to declamations in the Assembly, and personal attacks in printed pamphlets, are not exactly the same thing. The first may be immediately repelled, or, if they are passed in silence, to prevent an irritation which might interfere with more important objects, are soon forgotten. But the latter, no man, who knows what belongs to himself, will suffer to pass without a reply, who has the means of defence in his hands.

I am not sorry, however, for the occasion which has compelled me to come forward at present. The more the points at issue are agitated, the less is the danger to be apprehended, from the unfounded clamour and declamation, to which they have given rise.

H. MONCREIFF WELLWOOD.

EDINBURGH, QUEEN'S STREET, }
8th June 1807.



D. Willison, Printer, Edinburgh.











